

William Locke and Ulrich Teichler
(eds.)

**The Changing Conditions
for Academic Work and Careers
in Select Countries**

WERKSTATTBERICHTE

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**Brazil:
A Typology of the Academic Profession and
the Impact of Recent Government and
Institutional Policies**

Elizabeth Balbachevsky and Simon Schwartzman

1. Introduction

Brazil, like many other countries in Latin America, was taken by surprise by the new demands and challenges posed by globalization. The successful experience of industrialization based on import-substitution had produced a strong inwardly-oriented culture among the Brazilian elite and society. The prevailing notion was one that linked development to the government's success in protecting Brazilian enterprises. Thus, autarchic, hierarchical, and centralized perspectives were predominant.

But the last decade of the 20th century brought impressive changes in this framework. The opening up of the economy, even though moderate, exposed Brazilian enterprises to an unusually high level of competition. Monetary stabilization¹, a successful privatization program and a new regulatory framework, enacted by the Constitutional amendments of the 1990s, created a new macro-economic environment. The impact of these changes in education and the labor market was contradictory. The need for highly qualified manpower increased; however, industrial employment did not grow, while technology-intensive agriculture replaced the more traditional, labor-intensive rural economy. At the same time, with the expansion of secondary education in the 1990s, the demand for mass higher education increased, particularly in sectors requiring fewer entry qualifications from students, and low investment from the teaching institutions. So, the tensions between the higher-end, selective and highly productive higher education and the demand for lower-end, accessible and less demanding education became stronger than ever.

This chapter outlines the evolution of Brazilian higher education under these circumstances. It begins with a brief history of higher education in Brazil, de-

scribes its most relevant features today, and ends with a picture of the most recent trends, highlighting some of the challenges facing the Brazilian academic profession.²

2. Background

Higher education is a recent experience in Brazilian society. The first higher education institutions were created only in early nineteenth century. Then, the chosen institutional framework was the isolated professional school. These schools were public, with free tuition and supported by the federal government. Only in the early 1920s was the aim of creating a university seriously considered by the Brazilian elite. The first university, the Universidade do Brasil, was nominally established in 1920, but remained a loose connection of autonomous professional schools. In 1931 the first university law was enacted. This law was based on the Napoleonic notion that higher education institutions were licensed by the state to teach and certify for the established professions. Since all institutions had to provide the same core curriculum for each profession, the 1931 Law reserved little room for academic autonomy. In the long run, this starting point generated a large federal bureaucracy and an intricate web of rules and regulations regarding all dimensions of higher education. Until today, the Ministry of Education is in charge of supervision, inspection and enforcement of all these regulations. Such a complex system is also controlled by a National Council of Education and its state level counterparts.

The years between 1930 and 1950 consisted of growth and diversification. In 1934, the State of São Paulo, the richest region in the country, created its own university, the Universidade de São Paulo, by merging several existing professional schools (in engineering, law, medicine, agriculture) with a newly founded Faculty of Science, Philosophy and Humanities. This was followed in 1940 by the reorganization of the Universidade do Brasil with its own Faculty of Philosophy. After 1945, the University of Brazil became the federal university of Rio de Janeiro, and a nation-wide network of federal universities began to grow. The first Catholic university, the Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro, was launched in 1940. In the following years, new federal and Catholic universities were created in the most important state capitals throughout the country, and several states started to organize their own regional higher education systems. Isolated non-university institutions continued to be created by state governments and the private sector.

In 1968, the federal government, then under military rule, enacted a bill seeking to reorganize the entire Brazilian higher education sector. The reform replaced the old chair system with the departmental model, proposed the adoption of full-time contracts for faculty, regulated graduate studies and shifted the undergraduate level from the conventional sequential courses to a credit system, similar to the

U.S. model (for an overview of the 1968 Reform, see Klein, 1992, and Durhan, 1998). Due to its authoritarian origins, the reform faced mistrust among faculty and students and resistance from the powerful faculty of the most traditional professional schools. Nevertheless, in the long run, it was successfully implemented in the public sector. Estimates show that the federal universities budget grew 5.4 fold in real terms between 1972 and 1986. Most of these resources were used to pay for full-time contracts for faculty (Schwartzman, J., 1993, and Velloso, 1987).

The 1968 Reform was implemented amid an explosive increase in the demand for higher education. In 1960, total enrolment in Brazilian higher education amounted to 93,000 students (Schwartzman, 1992). By 1970, enrolment had already jumped to 425,478. Five years later, in 1975, students at the undergraduate level had reached 1.1 million. This sharply enlarged student population was not envisaged by the 1968 Reform. To meet this demand, the Government relaxed the constraints over the creation of private, non-university institutions. The new colleges and professional schools absorbed the bulk of the expansion, protecting the public sector from the most deleterious effects of mass higher education. The growth of the private sector was achieved mostly by an increase in the number of for-profit, teaching-oriented, non-university schools and colleges. In the public sector, entrance examinations and *numerus clausus* are still used to limit the growth of enrolment and the pressures on teaching.

As depicted in more detail by one of the authors in another paper (Balachevsky, 2004), graduate education in Brazil was first regulated in 1968. In the 1970s, a period of rapid economic expansion, it experienced explosive growth, when the major public science and technology agencies identified graduate programs as a priority for investment. In the 1980s, the economy ceased to grow, resources for research and new investment in higher education dwindled, but support for graduate education was maintained, and the number of scholarships increased dramatically. The explanation for such a paradox can be found in the Brazilian federal budgetary process. While funding for research is conceived as “expenses” and can be subject to major cuts from one year to the next, funding for scholarships is conceived as “salary” and the law forbids major cuts. When economic stagnation beset the Brazilian economy in the 1980s, the managers in the major science and technology agencies converted their funds from “soft” research expenses to “hard” scholarships and bench funds for graduate studies.

Thus, the federal government has been investing huge resources in the graduate level since the early 1970s. Money is provided to support programs and fellowships are generously offered to attract students. Unlike at the undergraduate level, the Government and the academic community has made a decisive effort to assure quality at this level since the early 1970s. At that time, the Fundação Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (CAPES), the Ministry of Education agency in charge of graduate education, created a sophisticated peer review

system that, to this day, successfully connects performance with support at the graduate level.

3. Some Key Data

The 2004 census of the Brazilian higher education system shows that it comprises 2,013 institutions, of which 169 are universities. Only 11 per cent of the institutions are public. Public institutions are owned by the federal government (4 %), or by state (provincial) governments (4 %) and also by municipalities (local government) (3 %). On average, public institutions are bigger and more established than the private ones: they represent 49 per cent of all Brazilian universities and are responsible for most of the country's graduate education (82 % of the enrolments at this level). The exceptions are the municipal-owned institutions, which are usually small and less well-established colleges.

The private sector is huge: it includes 1,789 institutions and 72 per cent of all undergraduate enrolment. Most of these institutions are small, family owned colleges, and 78 per cent are formally classified as for-profit institutions. As such, they pay taxes and are not required to provide scholarships or philanthropic services. Others, formally classified as philanthropic, are mostly confessional or community-owned institutions. Most of the catholic universities belong to this group. However, there are also large for-profit universities, and small philanthropic institutions.

In the private sector, full time contracts are mostly found in philanthropic universities (75 %), and particularly in catholic universities. These universities are usually very prestigious and tend to favor graduate academics with full-time contracts. Among non-university, for-profit institutions, only 10 per cent of the academic posts are full-time. In for-profit universities, this figure rises but remains low at 22 per cent.

Table 1 also shows that 21 per cent of all academic positions in Brazilian higher education are filled by professionals holding a doctorate. Academics with such a profile are to be found more usually in federal and state owned universities. In fact, while the public sector offers only 34 per cent of all academic positions, 63 per cent of all Brazilian academics holding a doctorate find employment in the public sector. This pattern is opposed to the one found in the private sector, which offers 66 per cent of all academic positions, but secures only 37 per cent of the academics holding a Ph.D.

Table 1: Brazilian Higher Education System: Key Data, 2004

Ownership	Type	Number of Institutions	Under-graduate Enrolments	Graduate Enrolments*	Faculty employed		
					Total	Ph.D.	Full-time
Federal	Universities	46	533,892	N/A	49,104	21,941	40,577
	Non Univ.	41	40,692	N/A	5,335	922	4,260
	Total	87	574,584	53,776	54,439	22,863	44,837
State	Universities	32	429,823	N/A	34,804	14,274	26,538
	Non Univ.	43	41,838	N/A	3,378	467	1,648
	Total	75	471,661	35,002	38,182	14,741	28,186
Local	Universities	5	59,208	N/A	4,007	588	1,305
	Non Univ.	57	72,875	N/A	3,796	449	301
	Total	62	132,083	414	7,803	1,034	1,606
All Public	Universities	83	1,022,923	N/A	87,915	36,803	69,420
	Non Univ.	141	155,405	N/A	12,509	1,835	5,209
	Total	224	1,178,328	89,192	100,424	38,638	74,629
For Profit	Universities	26	407,303	N/A	21,822	2,624	4,880
	Non Univ.	1,375	1,189,591	N/A	86,149	7,214	8,635
	Total	1,401	1,596,894	N/A	107,971	9,838	13,515
Philanthropic	Universities	60	939,491	N/A	55,434	9,631	10,644
	Non Univ.	328	449,020	N/A	29,413	3,172	3,474
	Total	388	1,388,511	N/A	84,847	12,803	14,117
All Private	Universities	86	1,346,794	N/A	77,256	12,255	15,524
	Non Univ.	1,703	1,683,611	N/A	115,562	10,386	12,108
	Total	1,789	2,985,405	19,380	192,818	22,641	27,632
Total	Universities	169	2,369,717	N/A	165,171	49,058	83,944
	Non Univ.	1,844	1,734,016	N/A	128,071	12,221	18,317
	Total	2,013	4,163,733	108,572	293,242	61,279	102,261

Source: Brazilian Ministry of Education, Higher Education Census of 2004, for institutions, under-graduate enrolments and faculty information.

*These figures include students enrolled in master's of science programs, professional master's programs, and doctorate programs. Source: CAPES Foundation, 2004

URL: <http://www.capes.gov.br/sobre/estatisticas/>

N/A: not available.

Table 2 shows how these figures have changed since the early 1990s. This table highlights two different tendencies in the Brazilian academic market: first, as it has expanded in the last years, it has also become more selective regarding academic credentials: in 1994, 63 per cent of the academics holding only a master's degree found employment in the public sector. Ten years later, this figure dropped to 28 per cent.³ At the same time, a growing number of graduate professionals has been absorbed by private institutions: in 1994, 37 per cent of professionals with a master's degree were employed by the private sector. In 1996, this figure increased to 45 per cent, and in 2002 it was 71 per cent. In the last census, 74 per cent of the Brazilian academics with master's degrees had jobs in private institu-

tions. Among professionals with doctorates, the pattern is similar: in 1994, 21 per cent of the academics with a doctorate were employed by the private sector. In the last ten years this figure grew steadily and reached 37 per cent in 2004.

Table 2: Patterns of Academic Employment and Credentials 1994-2004

Year	Academic credentials	Public sector institutions	Private sector institutions	Total (100%)
1994	Without master's degree	42.9	57.1	(86,625)
	Master's degree	63.4	36.6	(33,531)
	Doctorate	79.0	21.0	(21,326)
1998	Without master's degree	39.6	60.4	(88,567)
	Master's degree	55.1	44.9	(45,482)
	Doctorate	75.8	24.2	(31,073)
2002	Without master's degree	28.6	71.4	(101,153)
	Master's degree	29.7	70.3	(77,404)
	Doctorate	65.1	34.9	(49,287)
2004	Without master's degree	25.7	74.3	(126,987)
	Master's degree	27.8	72.2	(104,976)
	Doctorate	63.0	37.0	(61,279)

Source: Brazilian Ministry of Education, Higher Education Census of 1994, 1998, 2002 and 2004.

Table 2 reveals a new pattern. From the 1970s until the early 1990s, the private and public sectors coexisted with almost no point of contact. Operating under different rules and with diverse goals, one sector almost ignored the other, and recruited professionals from segregated markets: public institutions relied on their alumni and had the public graduate system meet their needs for faculty preparation. Private institutions also enlisted their academics from among their alumni. In their market, faculty's academic credentials were not important. Instructors working in the private sector were poorly qualified and were totally ignorant of the rules of academic life.

This picture started to change at the beginning of 1990s, when a new Education Act, the *Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação (LDB)*, was passed. The changes in the regulatory framework, discussed below, required the private sector to improve the academic credentials of their staff, to qualify for university autonomy and other privileges granted by the new legislation. So, they opened a new market for young academics coming from the ever-expanding graduate education system. This happened at a time when recruitment in the public sector was frozen,⁴ making the private sector more attractive for young scholars. The new professional profile sought by the private sector entailed a differentiation among faculty within institutions and pressures for research support and institutional career paths. Some institutions resisted such expensive changes and continued operating in the old pattern.

Others opted to restrict such opportunities to small “islands of academic life”, while preserving the traditional ways of operation in the rest of the institution. Finally, a few are trying to take advantage of this opportunity to create a new entrepreneurial environment inside the institution.

4. Intra-sector Institutional Differences

All the developments depicted above have made Brazilian higher education not only a diversified but also a highly stratified system. Some patterns of stratification are indicated by the sector analysis sketched in the last section. But, even inside each sector, a more detailed analysis is needed to highlight the major forms of differentiation.⁵

Within the public sector, the major divide is the one created by the presence of graduate education. In the late 1960s, only a few public institutions and a small number of catholic ones were well-positioned to take advantage of government initiatives to support graduate education. These institutions created many graduate programs and built up a strong domain of graduate studies. As such, they offered better prospects of work for the new generation of young scholars that was returning after completing their graduate studies abroad. The influx of new scholars created a dynamic environment inside these institutions. With a great number of Ph.D. holders, they were also able to take advantage of the investment the Brazilian government was mobilizing for science and technology. Today, these institutions form what could be called the first stratum of the Brazilian higher education, the Brazilian *research universities*. They provide a good working environment, which, in turn, allows them to secure the better-qualified academics and attract financial support for research. Major features of these institutions are, first, a great proportion of Ph.D. holders among their faculty. In some of them, more than 90 per cent of all professors have a Ph.D. Second, graduate education: none of them have less than 30 per cent of their students enrolled in graduate programs. In some, this proportion is nearly 50 per cent. These are few in number. In the last education census no more than 20 institutions qualified for this stratum. But they awarded most of the 9,000 doctoral degrees conferred annually in the country.

Most public institutions could be placed in the second stratum. They hold university status but lack the conditions for effective academic development. They have not been able to establish a strong graduate provision and thus have problems in attracting and retaining holders of doctorates among their faculty. Here, bureaucracy and unions have greater power, and the central administration tends to have more room for maneuver. Usually less than 15 per cent of the students are enrolled in graduate studies and they tend to be confined to the master's level. Only a few programs are able to muster the credentials and competences required to be qualified to award Ph.Ds. Yet, these institutions are regionally relevant, both as a local alternative for advanced training and also as a source of competence in

solving local problems. In previous research (Balbachevsky et al., 2004), faculty from these institutions were found to be strongly motivated by regional demands and problems. Thus, institutions in this stratum can be classified as *regional* institutions.

The third and lowest stratum includes the majority of Brazilian higher education institutions. They are mostly private institutions or owned by small municipalities and poorer states. Most of them are small colleges or isolated professional schools. But there are also giants among them, holding the status of universities, where undergraduate enrolments can stretch to 40,000 students or more. Regardless of size, all institutions in this stratum are strongly oriented towards labor market demands for short-term training (Sampaio, 2000). For this reason, institutions at this stratum are classified as *market-oriented*.

5. Segmentation⁶

In 1992, the first nationwide survey of the academic profession in Brazil revealed an occupational group as diverse and stratified as the higher education institutions in which they worked. The data collected by the survey distinguished at least four occupational profiles. Ten years later, in 2003, a new nationwide survey confirmed the findings of the first survey while revealing interesting patterns of change.

The first profile, Type I, is the traditional professor as originally conceived in Brazil at the time that the first professional schools were created: a scholar distinguished in his profession and occupying the higher ranks in the faculty of professional schools. This profile fits with the ideal type of the liberal professional as described in the sociological literature of the 1950s. Professors with this profile dedicate most of their time to the practice of their profession and do little if any systematic research. Some of them are academically under-qualified; for them, academic life is a prestigious activity but not central to their professional life. They come to the university to deliver their lectures and prestige is the most important currency in their relations with the academic world. They do not perceive themselves as part of the academic profession but rather as members of their particular profession.

This academic profile was dominant in Brazilian higher education until the end of the 1960s. The 1968 reform, with the suppression of the chair system and the introduction of full-time contracts in public universities, represented a severe blow to their previous dominance. Today, they are to be found mostly in some prestigious traditional professional schools, particularly in law and medicine. Nevertheless, in both the 1992 and 2003 surveys, there are many academics in private and public institutions that declared that most of their income comes from other, non-academic activities. Most of them have a master's or lower degree, but all, even the Ph.D. holders, show an active engagement in publishing books and articles,

while at the same time not undertaking any systematic research. Usually, these are part-time or hourly paid professors, declaring only a small number of teaching hours per week (six to eight hours on average).

Type II encompasses those with a profile that closely resembles those identified in the international literature as the academic scholar: good academic credentials and a full-time academic contract, which permits a permanent involvement in research and knowledge production. In our analyses of the 1992 and 2003 data, these academics are fully professionalized as researchers: they relate strongly with academic networks in their fields, and some of them showed strong links with the international community. They publish regularly and have regular access to resources for supporting their research work. When asked, they tend to identify research as the activity they most prefer. In 1992, professionals with this profile were more often in research-oriented institutions, but even there they represented a minority: only 22 per cent of the faculty from the most prestigious universities could be classified as having this profile. They could also be found in regional institutions, but here they represented only a tiny minority of 5 per cent. In both types of institutions they were strongly committed to graduate education. In regional institutions, scholars with this profile tended to be concentrated in some departments – the ones the Brazilian literature used to call “islands of competence” (Oliveira, 1984).

The 2003 survey showed an increase in the proportion of academics with this profile in all kinds of institutions: 37 per cent in the research-oriented institutions, 14 per cent in regional institutions, and 5 per cent in market-oriented institutions. For academics fitting this profile in both regional and research institutions, the link with the university is central. They have full-time contracts, work only at one institution and the salary paid by this institution represents, on average, 84 per cent of their income. In market-oriented institutions, most of the academics fitting this profile are younger (40 years old, on average, compared with 48 years old on average in research universities) and most (65 %) declared they carry out their research-related activities in other institutions. Yet, they also tend to concentrate their teaching responsibilities in only one institution, in spite of not having a full-time contract there.

The Type III profile refers to professors who have stable and full-time contracts but do not match the standards of professional achievement of Type II. Most of them do not have a doctoral degree and are not involved in publishing. They not only publish less, but when they do publish, they have access only to less relevant channels (Balachevsky, 2006), with little, if any, impact. As such, they have no access to funds to support research activity. They are almost entirely disconnected from the national and international community of peers. Thus, their professional identities are not defined by their professional degree, as with Type I, nor by their personal achievements as an independent scholar and researcher, as with Type II. Their professional identity is based on their affiliation to the institution and to the

small group of colleagues with whom they share daily problems, concerns, and successes. In a sense, they tend to have a semi-professional identity, as depicted by Etzioni and collaborators (1969): they tended to emphasize intrinsic rewards – such as the personal satisfaction of being a good teacher – as opposed to extrinsic ones, achieved through scholarly activity, that are by definition under public scrutiny. This explains why scholars with this profile are so intensely opposed any attempts to introduce intra-institutional differentiation based on merit, prestige, and power. For them, the only acceptable bases for differentiation are the ones determined by factors in principle accessible to everyone, like seniority. In the 1992 survey, professors with this profile corresponded to 53 per cent of all scholars employed by the research-oriented institutions and 77 per cent of those at regional institutions. Data from the 2003 survey shows a decrease in the proportion of professionals with this profile in both contexts: 38 per cent of the faculty working in research-oriented institutions and 58 per cent in regional institutions. Data from the 2003 survey indicates a small number of professionals with these characteristics working in the private sector (3 %). They are mostly employed by small, isolated graduate programs at master's level created by private institutions in order to fulfill the criteria for official recognition as universities. In these small environments, they have access to excellent working conditions: well-paid full time contracts (on average with higher incomes than their peers in the public sector), small teaching loads (on average 3 hours per week), and few performance pressures.

Type IV consists of the professors who teach undergraduates in private institutions. They cannot count on job security and spend long hours in the classroom in order to earn a living. In the 1992 survey, these professionals usually had no higher education beyond their undergraduate degree and were almost entirely ignorant of the rules and procedures of academic life. Data from the 2003 survey complemented by the data collected in the 2004 official census of Brazil's higher education (INEP, 2006) show an impressive change in the profile of these professors: they now hold better academic credentials than in the past. The 2004 census showed that 39 per cent of the academics employed by the private sector had a master's degree, while another 12 per cent had a doctoral degree. These figures sharply contrast with those from 1989, when only 12 per cent of these professors held a master's degree and another 3 per cent had a doctoral degree. Nevertheless, while their academic profile had improved in the past decade, other features had not. Most of these professionals continue to work part-time or are hourly paid with no prospect of security and few opportunities for personal academic initiative.

The profiles outlined above are by-products of the historical changes in Brazilian higher education. The Type I profile was well fitted to the first, pre-1920 institutional model – the professional school. The Type II profile emerged with the first universities and grew in number and strength with the 1968 reforms and with the support that graduate education has received from government since the late

1960s. The Type III profile grew with the earlier expansion of the public sector in the 1960s and 1970s. By that time, the number of scholars with good academic credentials was not sufficient to fill all the full-time positions created in the public sector. Recruited with the privileges that went with their civil servant status, these academics were soon organized in teachers' unions that fiercely defended their access to all the rights associated with the professorate, while actively fighting for reductions in the requirements for academic performance and credentials.⁷ Finally, the emergence of the Type IV profile is related to the process of massification that, in Brazil, was undertaken by the private sector. The growth of this sector was achieved mostly by an increase in the number of for-profit, teaching-oriented, non-university schools and colleges. As such, these institutions sought staff with lower academic credentials who would accept being paid on an hourly basis.

6. The New Societal Framework

The new economic and social environment of the 1990s brought additional pressures for Brazilian higher education. Society's perceptions of higher education changed in two major respects: the first was a shift from viewing the purpose of higher education as elite formation towards the education and training of the general work-force. This movement increased the demand for quality control at the undergraduate level, including the mass-oriented private sector, and teacher training programs. Demands in this direction were voiced early in the 1990s by public opinion as articulated in newspapers and magazines. In the 2000s, this perspective was reinforced and supplemented by the issue of social inclusion and access to higher education by minority groups.

The other change was to shift the academic research system from an inner academic self-orientation to one that is more demand-driven. Expectations about the outputs of scientists, the interface between the university and industry and the beneficial impact of knowledge in enhancing enterprises' competitiveness are widespread in Brazilian society. Demands of this kind have been voiced by some influential organizations in Brazilian industry and were echoed by senior administrators of major science and technology funding agencies, in their fight to sustain the levels of public spending allocated to science and technology.

From 1994 to 2003, the Brazilian government was led by President Fernando Henrique Cardoso. Cardoso's response to these new demands followed the standard reforms in higher education in the context of globalization identified in the literature (Enders, 2001, 2004; Scott, 2003; Goedegebuure et al., 1993). Government adopted new approaches designed to steer institutions from both the private and public sectors towards better performance in undergraduate education and improving the interface between higher education institutions and the productive sector.

In 1994, the Ministry of Education took the first steps towards an effective evaluation of undergraduate courses. From 1995 to 2002, it implemented a National Evaluation of Undergraduate Programs (Schwartzman, 2004). This was a mandatory assessment, where the performance of all graduating students in the each discipline was measured nationwide. Even though individual students' scores were not made public, the average performance of students in each institution was widely publicized and achieved great media coverage, strongly impacting public opinion. The outcome of the National Evaluation was also used by the Ministry of Education to rank institutions. The ranking procedures took into consideration the institution's average student performance, its infrastructure, and the academic profile of its faculty. Institutions placed in the bottom quartile were to be placed under supervision by expert visiting committees. Failure to implement the recommended corrective measures could be punished by suspending accreditation of the undergraduate program.

In 1997, the Brazilian government also passed a new Education Act, the *Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação* (LDB). The new Act explicitly recognized the existence of institutions primarily devoted to undergraduate teaching. This differentiation was officially acknowledged for the first time. Previously, the ideal of a unitary system, governed by the same rules and sharing the same goals was the basis for all Brazilian higher education regulations. Recognizing undergraduate teaching as a legitimate academic goal was an important step, since it freed institutions from having to create some kind of graduate education and research just for the sake of fulfilling bureaucratic requirements, wasting resources and energies in activities that were beyond their reach.

The new Education Act also granted greater autonomy to universities, while increasing pressure on their academic staff. According to LDB, in order to be accredited (and, for the first time, re-accredited every five years) as a university, the institution should provide graduate education to a minimum standard as evaluated by CAPES, a career path for its faculty, and at least one third of its academics must have a master's or higher degree.

For the federal universities, the government proposed effective financial autonomy. The universities were to be free to make their own decisions on allocating their resources,⁸ but their budgets would be based on achievements measured by performance indicators, rather than historical expenditure. Congress however did not approve this proposal. It was received with mistrust by the universities' authorities, faculty and employees and also by Congress members with strong regional interests. University authorities feared that the proposal could lead to the reduction of their budgets. Faculty and employees' unions suspected that university autonomy could be the first step in a government strategy to privatize public higher education, and they feared the competition it could entail within and among institutions. Finally, distrust of the government's intentions was coupled with

regional concerns that autonomy could mean transferring the financial burden of operating the universities from the federal to the states' budget.

Another initiative was the introduction of a financial bonus for faculty, based on the time each person dedicated to undergraduate teaching. Most institutions, however, distributed the resources evenly among their staff, and the original intention, to enhance the value of undergraduate education, went unfulfilled.

In spite of these obstacles, the results of these and other initiatives achieved some important results. They improved the standards of the system as a whole. Pressures from the regulatory agencies at the federal level resulted in improvements in institutional recruitment policies, raising the threshold for the minimum academic profile. All in all, these new developments had the effect of creating a more competitive environment for higher education as a whole (Sampaio, 2000).

7. Recent Trends

The election of Luis Ignacio Lula da Silva as president in 2003 weakened the process of reform in the Brazilian higher education system sketched so far in this chapter. His party, Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT, the Workers Party), has strong links with the unions and social movements. Thus, Lula's policy proposals for higher education are strongly based on the demands made by public university teachers and employee's unions.

One of the most salient components of Lula's higher education policy is its outspoken aversion to any initiative which resembles privatization. From the point of view of unions in the public sector, privatization is related to three different issues to which they are strongly opposed: charging tuition fees in public institutions, external assessment, and allowing the universities to raise and manage funds independently. Since Lula's election, a myriad of decisions and regulations were put in place to force universities to be more dependent on public money while, at the same time, less accountable to external stakeholders.

In his election campaign of 2002, Lula had criticized the National Evaluation of Undergraduate Programs, which was opposed by unions from the public sector. Once elected, however, he did not dare to abolish the evaluation procedures that had attained such visibility in the preceding years. Instead, he created a whole new system of quality assurance for higher education, giving strong emphasis to self-assessment by the institutions, and replacing the existing National Evaluation by a similar assessment called ENADE (Exame Nacional de Desempenho dos Estudantes – National Assessment of Students' performance). The new assessment is applied just to a sample of students each year, and has serious methodological flaws; the government itself says that its results should not be taken at face value, since it is just one part of a comprehensive assessment procedure – which is still to be developed (Verhine et al., 2006). Lula's government also proved to be less committed to the quest for university autonomy as it was proposed in the Educa-

tion Law (LDB) passed by the former government. As such, this issue has been successfully blocked by the forces opposing change to the *status quo*.

Lula's government also attempted a major reform of higher education. Its main points, presented as a draft in early 2005, are the promise of significant increase in resources for federal universities, strict supervision of the private sector and severe restrictions on international investment in the Brazilian higher education market. Answering the organizational demands from unions in the public sector, the initiative reasserts the Government's compromise with higher education over democratic governance, allowing higher education institutions to be free to appoint people to senior positions internally, in direct elections with the participation of all students, teachers and employees. Non-governmental organizations' (NGO) pressure for a policies on access to higher education were met by the proposed introduction of quotas for blacks and students graduating from public secondary schools.

The reform's first draft was received with mistrust by almost all stakeholders. It was perceived as feeble by Lula's supporters and too intrusive by the public universities' authorities and the private sector. It was also widely criticized for its lack of focus and failure to address some critical issues about the future of higher education in Brazil, such as the quality and relevance of undergraduate education. By mid-2006, the government issued a new, attenuated version but the discussion of these issues is until now (February, 2007) paralyzed (Castro and Schwartzman, 2005).

The most relevant steps made by Lula in higher education are related to the issues of social inclusion and minority access. Even before proposing the reform, the government launched a program called "University for All", which exchanged fiscal benefits for tuition exemption for about 300,000 low income and minority students in private institutions. Thus, in spite of the strong statements against the private sector, the Lula government was the first, in Brazilian history, to provide it with a very significant subsidy (except for the support for research and graduate education in a few institutions such as the Catholic university in Rio de Janeiro).

Public universities were also encouraged to implement quota programs in order to lower the entrance threshold for students from public high schools and minority groups. These measures had mixed results. "University for All" has no means of assessing the quality of the undergraduate courses benefiting from the program and shows high levels of dropout among students. Also, while most of the public universities' administrators are willing to implement quotas for the entrance examinations; they are not ready to set aside resources for initiatives that could support the needs and improve the academic performance of the new kind of students the public universities are supposed to be catering for. Even the recent pressures to open evening courses and programs at federal universities were met with distrust and pleading for more resources on the part of the university authorities.

Even so, these initiatives created a new awareness in society about issues of inclusiveness in Brazilian higher education. It generated great expectations among the huge number of families on low income with young children and placed new pressures on the public sector institutions. Traditionally, public universities are elite institutions; teaching does not have a high status within these institutions; academic staff are not willing to take on large teaching loads, nor are they prepared to support the special needs of students with poor academic backgrounds. In such a scenario, it is not difficult to understand how much tension the new government's priorities have raised inside these institutions.

Regarding the private sector, Lula's initiatives have a permanent *leit-motif*: to introduce strict control and restrictions. One usual instrument for this policy, dating back several decades, has been to require high academic standards – full-time staff, doctoral degrees, evidence of research – of teaching-oriented and tuition-dependent institutions. The assumption is that teaching quality could only be assured if linked to research and a full-time, highly qualified professoriate. But the effects tend to contradict this. For most institutions, answering these demands creates budgetary burdens that can only be resolved by reducing the major item in their expenditures: academic salaries. These policies also have had an adverse impact on the process of differentiation that took place inside the private sector in the 1990s. It is not surprising that, in such environment, the institutions faring better are those adopting the old pattern for answering government demands: just make up the figures in order to give the right answers.

8. Concluding Remarks

The recent trends in Brazilian higher education outlined above give a framework for analyzing the dilemmas the country is facing and also for analyzing the effectiveness of the solutions offered. First, contrary to what is usually assumed, segmentation of the academic profession in Brazil has not increased in recent years. On the contrary, thanks to the regulations enforced in the 1990s and, to some extent, the expansion of graduate education, we can observe a convergence in broad terms: in all institutions faculty are now more active in research, more connected with their international peers, and have access to better contract conditions, including full-time contracts. However, this trend does not mean that Brazilian higher education is becoming more homogeneous, with all institutions evolving towards the research university model.

In the private sector, the pressures toward hiring highly qualified, full-time staff have created some good opportunities for young scholars, at the cost of keeping down the salaries and working conditions of most of their staff, including part-time contracts or payment by the hour. Indeed, most private institutions are confined to operating in a market consisting of the poorer families who cannot afford to pay more for educating their children. In this market, education is almost a

commodity. Competition is based on comparative advantages in cost and location. In such market, it is almost impossible to raise tuition fees to cover the extra expenses that institutions incur by employing better qualified staff with improved contract conditions. Quality is a luxury almost out of these institutions' reach.

One might wonder why private institutions do not diversify and make use of the new competences for tapping other more lucrative markets. It seems that the answer to this question rests on the small range of competences these institutions can muster. They are, mostly, family-owned enterprises that grew from successful examples of private secondary education. As such, they are institutionally weak. Not surprisingly, they are very centralized, and do not allow for much academic entrepreneurship. A few institutions are trying to diversify their portfolio, providing upgraded education in fields like business administration, and providing graduate faculty with services and new alternatives for professional training. But these are exceptions rather than the rule.

At public institutions, as access has become the prime issue, increasing undergraduate enrolment has been a priority. Until now, the target of raising the participation of public institutions in undergraduate education has been used by university authorities as an excuse for increasing the commitment of public funds to federal universities. Nevertheless, as public institutions only answer for a little more than 28 per cent of all undergraduate enrolments in the country, this issue has created some insecurity within the public sector.

The institutional model for the public sector in Brazil is very expensive: it presupposes small institutional differentiation and is based on a uniform contract model for all academic staff: stable, full-time employment and a small teaching load (from 6 to 8 hours in class per week). To significantly increase the participation of the public (elite and tuition free) sector in the country's undergraduate education, government can either radically increase the funds it invests in higher education – but this could only be made at expense of public spending on primary and secondary education – or squeeze academic salaries in real terms, jeopardizing the full-time commitment to the public sector. So far, the choice has been to pressurize the public universities to open up more places, without the additional investment in staff and institutions. Traditionally, most federal universities provide only day time courses, with the assumption that their students are young and do not need to work. Now, they are under pressure to open up evening courses for older and working students, and to lower their admission standards. There is also a promise of more resources for these developments, but this is still uncertain.

The pressure to increase undergraduate enrolment in public institutions has also generated tensions in some of the best public institutions, where senior academic staff find themselves undervalued by the government's new metric: commitment to graduate education and excellence in scholarly endeavor seems to have been withdrawn, and government officials appear less interest in this. Power is clearly shifting from the Type II to the Type III academics in these institutions.

One consequence is that Brazilian higher education institutions are not responding as swiftly as one would expect to the growing need to link education and research to the productive sector. Since the end of 2005, Brazil adopted an Innovation Act (*Lei da Inovação*, no. 10.973/05). The law, proposed in 2002, creates some incentives for private investment in technology and opens up opportunities for interchange between universities and enterprises, including shared gains from patents and periods of paid academic internship in enterprises and commercial laboratories. However, the law was treated with mistrust by the academic community and enterprises and so far has had little impact on academic research in Brazil. The push for opening up the ivory tower presented by this law has been successfully countered by a myriad of decisions and regulations forcing the universities to become more dependent on public money and offering less room for individual entrepreneurial initiatives on the part of academics. In the past, dynamic institutes and research centers within the universities were able to act independently in search of external resources and partners. Now, centralization is increasing, and these groups and sectors are left with few weapons to fight for its worth, especially as government pushes for the massification of the country's remaining elite public universities.

Notes

- 1 High inflation rates had plagued the Brazilian economy for more than three decades. Rates above 100% per year were registered from the end of 1980s. At the beginning of 1994, when the "Plano Real" stabilization program was launched, Brazil's inflation rate had reached more than 1,000 per cent per year. This long period with high inflation rates created a peculiar business culture in Brazil, where gains were to be sought in the overnight financial market rather than in good management. This, in turn, had an important impact on the demands for qualifications and training offered by the higher education system.
- 2 For this analysis we will use the data collected in two national surveys on the Brazilian academic profession. The first took place in 1992 and was supported by the Carnegie Foundation under the international project "International Academic Profession." The second survey took place ten years later, in 2003, and was supported by the Ford Foundation. Both surveys use the same sample design and parameters, which enables comparison of similar variables in two time periods.
- 3 While the data from the official census refers to academic positions (places), this data is the best estimate available for individuals. The 2003 National Survey of the Brazilian Academic Profession shows that the Brazilian academics tend to concentrate their academic activity in just one institution, even when they do not have a full-time contract. Even in the private sector, when asked how many academic institutions they were working for at the time of the interview, 71% of the respondents answered just one. This pattern is a by product of individual strategies on the part of the professors, but also a policy adopted by a great number of private institutions. Due to the heavy burden placed by the Brazilian labor legislation, even private for-profit institutions show a marked tendency to hire a small number of instructors, giving them a large number of classes to teach.
- 4 In the mid-1990s, to limit public spending, the federal government forbade the hiring of new civil servants, which included university staff in the federal institutions.
- 5 The typology presented here was first proposed by Balbachovsky, 2000.
- 6 This typology was firstly outlined in Schwartzman and Balbachovsky, 1995. It was updated for 2003 in Balbachovsky, 2007.

- 7 As an example, in 1980 the unions in federal universities were victorious in a movement that demanded the immediate and universal inclusion of all scholars hired as helpers in the permanent staff of these institutions. Most of these had no graduate education at all. Nevertheless, they were assigned the position of assistant professor. The same decree (Decree 86.487/80) also disconnected the institutional career from the academic degree in federal universities, allowing scholars without doctorates to reach full professorship. This decree was only withdrawn in 1994. In another example, at the beginning of 2006, the University of São Paulo Teachers' Union (ADUSP) asked for a downgrade in the requirements for a career at the University, so that professors without Ph.D.s could be accepted, leading to secure tenured contracts.
- 8 As part of the civil service, Federal universities cannot decide about creating or closing down academic departments; cannot define the salary levels for their staff, which is the same for all federal institutions; and cannot transfer resources between budgetary items (investment, consumption, salaries, equipment, and so forth). Also acquisition of equipment and service contracts have to follow the strict rules of the public sector.

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